

ABSTRACT OF DISCLOSURE

An electrical switch assembly for controlling an electrical appliance, which assembly comprises first and second electrical elements. The first element is an on/off switch for initially switching on the appliance. The second element is a pressure-sensitive variable resistor for subsequently adjusting the operating condition of the appliance. The variable resistor comprises a first part having a resilient deformable and electrically conducting resistive surface, and a second part having a surface including two contacts and a resistive element connecting the two contacts. One of the parts is movable to press against the other part such that their surfaces bear against one another, thereby causing the resistive surface to deform against the surface of the second part over an area of contact and causing electrical connection between the resistive surface and element. The resistive surface and element together then provide a resultant resistance between the two contacts of a value that reduces as the area of contact increases corresponding to the pressure acting upon the two parts. The assembly includes an operating mechanism for operating the two electrical elements, which incorporates manual operating means for initial movement to operate the on/off switch and subsequent movement, while the on/off switch is on, to operate the variable resistor.